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AUTHOR Barnett, Deborah; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to help in planning inclusive educational programs for children and youth with deaf-blindness or other severe disabilities. The guide covers: the importance of "person first language" in referring to people with disabilities, the roles of all participants in the inclusive school community; increasing awareness; creating a working team; suggestions for team operation; including parents as partners; sharing information with parents; creative problem solving; planning for action; curriculum modification; adaptations and accommodations; instructional strategies; utilization of para-educators; encouraging friendhsips between students with disabilities and peers; use of peer buddies; the Circle of Friends activity; integrated related services; peer tutors; and McGill Action Planning System (MAPS); transition planning; and including children who are deaf-blind. Also provided are a list of inclusion values, an inclusion checklist for a school's self evaluation process, an assessment instrument for school district evaluation, an inclusion action plan form, a sample team meeting agenda form, and a listing of 43 print resources. (Contains 10 references.) (DB)

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ED 391 323

The Systems Change Primer

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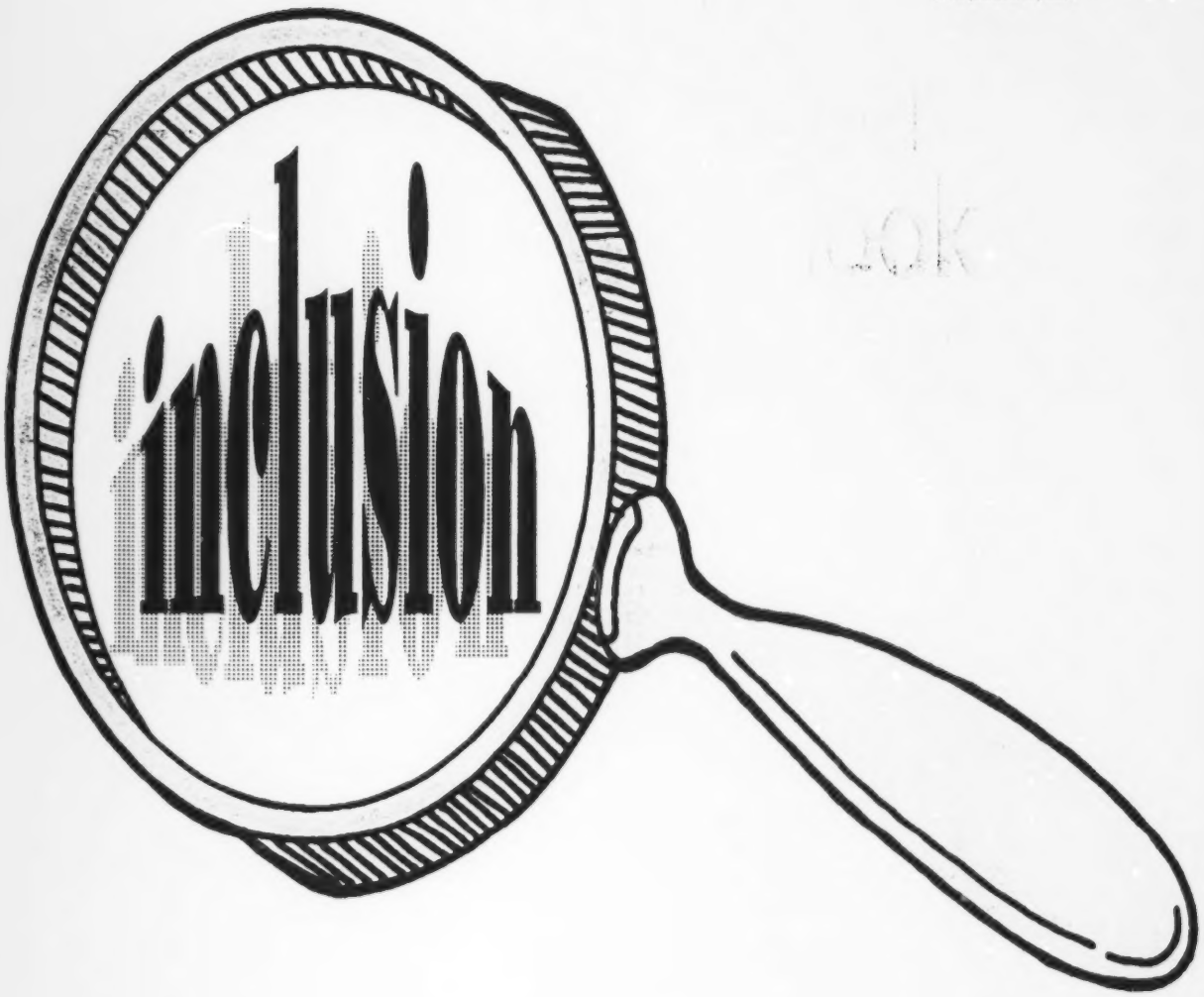

EC304572

South Dakota Statewide Systems Change
South Dakota Deaf - Blind Project

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INCLUSION: 1) *The act of including or the state of being included.*

2) *Something included.*

INCLUDE: 1) *To have or take in a part or member; contain.*

2) *To put into a group, class or total.*

South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project

The Project Staff

Project Director
Deborah Barnett

Model Systems Planner
Phylis Graney

Education Strategist
Janie Rook

Education Strategist
Pam Greene

Education Strategist
Kim Hanes

Parent Support Consultant
Carol Heltzel

Parent Support Consultant
Cheryl Duffy

Parent Support Consultant
Brenda Smith

South Dakota Deaf Blind Project

Project Administrator
Deborah Barnett

Project Director
Phylis Graney

Education Strategist
Kim Hanes

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
We Believe	2
Talking the Talk	3
Awareness: The First Step	4-5
Inclusion Checklist	6
School Inclusion Assessment	7-11
Inclusion Action Plan	12
Creating a Working Team	13-17
Team Meeting Agenda (sample form)	18-19
Parents as Partners	20-21
Creative Problem Solving	22-24
Modifying the Curriculum	25-26
Ideas for Adaptations and Modifications	27-32
Vary Instructional Methods	33-34
Para-Educators	35-36
Friends and Relationships	37-39
Peer Buddies	40
Circle of Friends	41-42
Integrated Related Services	43
Peer Tutors	44
MAPS	45
Transition Planning to Next Grade Level	46-48
Including Children Who Are Deaf-Blind	49-50
Resources/References	51-54

Introduction

This guide is to be used by educators, administrators, and parents as they plan inclusive educational programs for children and youth with disabilities and deaf-blindness. Providing inclusive educational programs for children with disabilities requires collaboration, teamwork, and the use of a variety of strategies. This primer is designed as a "starting point" to help you meet the individual needs of children.

Two major support systems to help schools, communities, and parents to promote inclusion for children with disabilities are the **South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project** and **The South Dakota Deaf-Blind Project**. These Projects provide technical assistance to schools, families, and communities to assist them in developing and implementing individual education plans (IEPs) for children with disabilities in general education and community settings. The Projects also provide public information, materials, training, and other resources to assist individual children or groups of children to be successfully included in general education and community settings.

The South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project provides services, consultation, and supports through regionally based Education Strategists and Parent Support Consultants. Funded by a Federal grant to the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, Office of Special Education, the staff of the project work in cooperation with State staff to support local schools in their efforts to build schools that *WELCOME ALL STUDENTS*.

To access assistance of the **South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project** and **South Dakota Deaf-Blind Project**, contact the Projects' main office at (605) 224-9554 or 1-800-873-3493. You may also receive assistance by calling the South Dakota Department of Education, Office of Special Education at (605) 773-3678. Public schools, private schools, parochial schools, parents/families, private service agencies, community organizations, advocacy groups, higher education institutions, and tribal education programs are eligible to request assistance from the project.

STATEWIDE SYSTEMS CHANGE SERVICES

1-800-873-3493

- √ Consultation
  - * On-Site
  - * Telephone
- √ Training
  - * Individual
  - * Group
- √ Provision of Materials: Print & Audiovisual

We Believe ...

- *Inclusion is a process, not a place, service or setting.*

- **Children and youth with disabilities have the right to participate in the same neighborhood schools, classrooms, extracurricular activities and community programs they would attend if they did not have a disability.**

- **Children and youth with disabilities should have the opportunity for meaningful relationships and experiences within their family, school, and community.**

- **Families and school personnel working collaboratively improves the overall quality of education programs for children and youth with disabilities.**

"Talking the Talk"

People with disabilities are **"People First"**. They want the same things in life as people who don't have disabilities. All too often persons with disabilities live in a world where they are subjected to prejudice and are not appreciated. Frequently they are "labeled" so that people see only their disability--not their abilities. Everyone wants and needs to be loved, appreciated, and respected.

* ***A first step to changing attitudes is changing the way we speak.***
* ***Become aware of the way you speak or describe people with disabilities.***
* ***Make it a point to use 'Person First Language'.***

Focus on the Individual:

Labels are extremely powerful. Don't let a person's disability become his label. Say "student, who has a disability" rather than "a disabled student". A small difference, but it makes the student more important than the disability.

Be Positive:

Think of the image that is created by the language you use! A person who has cerebral palsy is not a "CP Victim". Someone who has multiple sclerosis is not "stricken by MS". Words like "victim", "stricken" and "pitiful" promote negative feelings.

Say " uses a wheelchair" rather than "she is confined to a wheelchair". Say "he walks with crutches or braces" rather than "he is crippled". Not only is this more positive, it is more accurate. A wheelchair does not confine ... it allows the user to move around, to go to school, to work, to travel and to play.

Remember! *Refer to the disability only if it is relevant.*

A disability is a condition that interferes with a person's ability to do something independently - walk, see, hear, or learn. People with disabilities also have many talents and abilities. They have contributions to make. The words we use must convey this message.

The only label a person needs is his/her name. Instead of labels think of ALL people in terms of their strengths and abilities. Your language will promote a vision of inclusion for people with disabilities.

Awareness: The First Step

A "**can do**" attitude is vital to provide successful inclusion of children with disabilities into general education and community settings. School district personnel, families, and community members must actively collaborate to set the stage for inclusive opportunities for children and youth with disabilities and deaf-blindness.

In an inclusive school community EVERYONE has a role.

Administrators set the tone for the school and create a climate of acceptance of ALL children. They must provide for any staff training and support that is required to meet student needs. Administrators also must provide time for staff to plan, problem solve and collaborate.

Parents present their family values and priorities for their child. They can provide insight into the child's functioning in a variety of environments. Also, parents provide a vision or dream for their child's future.

Special Education Teachers share ownership of students with regular education staff. They collaborate with and provide consultation to other staff. Together the regular education teacher and the special education teacher identify the type and level of supports needed by students. They assist in adapting the curriculum, materials, and equipment or may co-teach with a regular education teacher. They help incorporate the student's Individual Education Plan, IEP, goals into typical activities and interactions.

Regular Education Teachers include the student with disabilities as a member of the class, not a visitor. They share ownership of students with special education staff. They adapt learning activities to include the student with disabilities in meaningful ways. They must incorporate goals from the Individual Education Plan (IEP) in typical activities and interactions. Inclusion draws on the **same capacities that make them good teachers for ALL children**.

Para-Educators facilitate the child's direct participation in school and classroom activities. They may provide assistance to the child with disabilities as well as other children in the classroom. They problem solve with team members to find creative solutions to the unique challenges of inclusion. They incorporate IEP goals in activities and interactions as directed.

Related Service Personnel plan functional approaches to addressing therapy needs in classroom activities and interactions. They assist in adapting materials and equipment. This can be a beneficial means of meeting a child's needs for related services while maximizing the child's participation in the regular classroom.

Some of the beginning steps in the awareness process are:

- **F**orm a team to develop a plan of action to facilitate inclusion in your school. Include administrators, educators and parents and other school personnel.
- **B**egin by sharing and expressing your school's dream for ALL students.
- **D**iscuss where students and staff are in the inclusion process.
- **D**etermine what skills will be needed by staff and how to obtain the necessary skills.
- **M**ake a plan to achieve Inclusion in your school. Assign tasks and timelines to actions. (See page 12).
- **P**rioritize actions needed to be successful.
- **S**chedule time to reflect upon accomplishments.
- **R**eevaluate your plan.

The following checklists, **"An Inclusion Checklist"** and **"School Inclusion Assessment"**, may help school personnel review best practices regarding the development of inclusive school communities and identify areas in which the staff sees need for further development.

AN INCLUSION CHECKLIST FOR YOUR SCHOOL

__ 1. Do we genuinely start from the premise that each child belongs in the classroom he or she would otherwise attend if not disabled (or do we cluster children with disabilities into special groups, classrooms, or schools)?

__ 2. Do we individualize the instructional program for all the children whether or not they have disabilities and provide the resources that each child needs to explore individual interests in the school environment (or do we tend to provide the same sorts of services for most children who share the same diagnostic label)?

__ 3. Are we fully committed to maintenance of a caring community that fosters mutual respect and support among staff, parents, and students in which we honestly believe that children without disabilities can benefit from friendships with children with disabilities and children with disabilities can benefit from friendships with children without disabilities (or do our practices tacitly tolerate children teasing or isolating some as outcasts)?

__ 4. Have our general educators and special educators integrated their efforts and their resources so that they work together as integral parts of a united team (or are they isolated in separate rooms or departments with separate supervision and budgets)?

__ 5. Does our administration create a work climate in which staff are supported as they provide assistance to each other (or are teachers afraid of being presumed to be incompetent if they seek peer collaboration in working with students)?

__ 6. Do we actively encourage the full participation of children with disabilities in the life of our school including co-curricular and extracurricular activities (or do they participate only in the academic portion of the school day)?

__ 7. Are we prepared to alter support systems for students as their needs change through the school year so that they can achieve, experience successes, and feel that they genuinely belong in their school and classes (or do we sometimes provide such limited services to them that the children are set up to fail)?

__ 8. Do we make parents of children with disabilities fully be a part of our school community so they also can experience a sense of belonging?

__ 9. Do we give children with disabilities just as much of the full school curriculum as they can master and modify it as necessary so that they can share elements of these experiences with their classmates (or do we have a separate curriculum for children with disabilities)?

__ 10. Have we included children with disabilities supportively in as many as possible of the same testing and evaluation experiences as their nondisabled classmates (or do we exclude them from these opportunities while assuming that they cannot benefit from the experiences)?

Reprinted with permission from: "The Inclusion Revolution" by Joy Rogers, published by the Center for Evaluation, Development, and Research, Phi Delta Kappa, Bloomington, Indiana.

School Inclusion Assessment

School Name: _____

Person Completing Assessment: _____

Date: _____

Score Code:		
	0	No evidence of this quality indicator
	1	Some evidences of this quality indicator for all students
	2	Some evidence of this quality indicator for all students
	3	The quality indicator is clearly evident for all students/staff, including programs for students with the most severe disabilities

Inclusion School District Assessment		Score	Comments
1.	Students with disabilities are included in age-appropriate regular education homerooms.		
2.	School building(s) are accessible to all persons with disabilities.		
3.	Students with disabilities have the same school calendar and hours as their typical peers.		
4.	The principal is *ultimately* responsible for implementation of all educational programs, which includes supervision and evaluation of the staff.		
5.	There is a defined plan or process for supporting staff in implementation of educational services (i.e., time for team planning meetings).		
6.	Ongoing information is provided through the regular education curricula on individuals with disabilities.		
7.	There is a school mission statement that reflects a philosophy that every child can learn and considers the school to be accountable for serving *all* students.		

Inclusion School District Assessment		Score	Comments
8.	The school philosophy supports the need for staff inservice training on a regular basis.		
9.	Special education staff attend faculty meetings with regular education staff.		
10.	Special education staff participate in regular supervisory duties (e.g., lunch, bus, playground duty).		
11.	Special education staff participate in extracurricular responsibilities (e.g., chaperons dances, works with student clubs).		
12.	Special education staff follow the same procedures and protocol as regular educators.		
13.	Special education staff interacts with regular education staff on a regular basis.		
14.	Special education staff take lunch breaks and/or prep periods in same areas as regular education staff.		
15.	Special education instruction consistently models positive attitudes and appropriate interactions with all students.		
16.	Special education staff consistently use age appropriate terminology, tone of voice, praise/reinforcement with all students.		
17.	Special education instruction uses age-appropriate materials.		
18.	When appropriate, student IEP programs include behavior management strategies that are positive and use natural cues and consequences.		
19.	Classrooms provide safe, orderly, and positive learning environments for all students.		
20.	Regular educators establish high expectations for *all* students within their classrooms.		
21.	Regular education staff consistently participate as IEP team members.		
22.	Cooperative learning strategies are implemented within classrooms.		

Inclusion School District Assessment	Score	Comments
23. Regular education staff team-teaches with special education staff.		
24. Learning objectives for students with disabilities are adapted and included within the core curriculum.		
25. Regular and special education staff collaborate to make material and environmental adaptations for students with disabilities.		
26. Regular education staff allow alternative or modified curriculum to be used in their classrooms.		
27. Regular education students have learned about disabilities via: -- learning stations or simulations about persons with disabilities. -- films or discussions about people with disabilities. -- guest speakers who are individuals with disabilities. -- unit on disabilities within regular education curricula. -- informal discussion/Q & A sessions -- attending classes with students with disabilities. -- Other:_____		
28. Special educators establish appropriate expectations for *all* students within their classrooms.		
29. IEP objectives reflect parent input.		
30. Activities for students with disabilities use materials, instructional procedures, and environments that are age-appropriate and individualized.		
31. Instruction for students with disabilities occurs in natural environments (e.g., regular classrooms, community).		
32. Regular and special education teachers collect specific data to document student performance and to identify a need for program modification.		

Inclusion School District Assessment	Score	Comments
33. Adaptations are made in curriculum and instruction to allow opportunities for students to develop independence across all environments.		
34. Curriculum and instruction uses positive programming and other non-aversive strategies in behavior programs.		
35. Educational and related services are provided in a consultative format and a direct service format, as needed.		
36. When services are delivered in a consultative format, they include training of service providers, follow-up, and regular monitoring of programs.		
37. Parents and other family members have the opportunity for educational and related services consultation, training, and follow-up to maximize student's development outside of school.		
38. Students with disabilities attend specials (e.g., art, music) with age-appropriate nonhandicapped peers.		
39. Students with disabilities have opportunities to participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, teams, clubs, dances, assemblies) with their nonhandicapped peers.		
40. For students with disabilities, who are 16 years or older or entered in 9th grade, a written plan for transition to adult services is provided.		
41. A current schedule of daily activities describing what students are doing, when, and with whom, is available and accessible within the classroom.		
42. For each IEP objective currently being implemented, there is an instructional program or lesson plan written in a format which allows for reliable implementation by anyone delivering direct instruction.		

Inclusion School District Assessment		Score	Comments
43.	There is a procedure for training and monitoring paraprofessionals implementing instructional programs.		
44.	Each written IEP instructional program currently being implemented is available to direct instructional staff (including regular education staff and paraprofessionals).		
45.	Data reflecting student progress is collected at least weekly on all IEP instructional programs.		
46.	There is a system for providing parents with information about available community resources (e.g., counseling, respite care).		
47.	There is a written plan and a formal process for the district to review educational and related services provided within the district.		
48.	Students with disabilities have regularly scheduled, structured opportunities to interact with age-appropriate, nondisabled peers throughout the school day.		
49.	When appropriate, related service personnel provide therapy services in integrated settings (e.g., regular classrooms, community) with nondisabled peers.		
50.	There is a written plan for students with disabilities to return to the regular classroom.		

INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

DATE: _____

PARTICIPANTS: _____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

ACTIONS FOR OUR SCHOOL TO CONSIDER... WHO? WHEN?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

How will we know if the plan is successful?

Who else needs to know about this plan?

REVIEW DATE: _____

Creating a Working Team

*"Working together as a **Team** is at the heart of the inclusion process".*

IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, promotes a team approach to serving children. Teaming is an effective strategy for planning and problem solving to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. Team members problem solve, brainstorm ideas for individualized adaptations, identify needs and provide each other support. Team characteristics and team members' roles should be clearly delineated. Teams must have a PROCESS for conducting meetings and have CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING and TIME MANAGEMENT skills to make the most of their time.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Teams should include those people affected by the decisions made by the team and those who have information or skills to help the team make better decisions (Thousand & Villa, 1992). The team players are the foundation, and, therefore, the composition of the **planning team** is very important. Individuals in the following positions/groups would constitute as potential team members:

WHO SHOULD BE ON THE TEAM?

Who has the expertise needed by the team?

Who is affected by the decisions?

Who has an interest in participating?

Regular Class Teacher	Special Educator
Administrator	Paraprofessional
Related Service Staff	Parent/Family
Student, if appropriate	Peers

* Other staff as identified by the team (i.e. school nurse, school counselor, other teachers, etc.)

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS

* Two or more members;
* Members with various roles;
* Members that engage in problem-solving and collaborative activities to reach goals;
* Shared commitment to the team's effort; and
* Active parent involvement.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEAM MEMBERS

The success of the team relies heavily on the abilities of its members. The following characteristics are important for an effective team member:

* Accept and appreciate differences in others;
* Treat others as individuals;
* Are flexible;
* Are willing learners;
* Communicate in constructive ways;
* Are active, participating, and productive;
* Are willing to share work, responsibilities, accolades and failure; and
* Bring problem-solving, collaborative values and skills to the group.

SUGGESTIONS:

* **Select a regularly scheduled team meeting time.**

  For Example:
  The Third Tuesday of the month,
  3:15 - 3:45
  or
  Every Wednesday morning,
  7:45 - 8:15

* **Develop a "code of conduct" or group norms for your team.**

  For Example:
  Meetings will start and end on time
  Stay on task
  Other activities will not preempt team meetings
  No interruptions
  All team members are open and honest

* **Use and follow a written agenda for the team meeting.**

  (Sample agenda form included, page 19)

* **Create a physical environment which is conducive to collaboration.**

  For Example:
  Create a circle for seating
  Arrange for privacy
  Provide coffee/donuts

* **Become creative problem solvers**. Use a problem-solving process to develop solutions unique and every day challenges. (See pages 23-25.)

* **Promote the use of "team roles".** Decide on some team "roles" that are necessary for your team to function more efficiently. Then make it a practice to use them EVERY time you meet as a team. ROTATE those roles to give everyone on the team a chance to practice different skills, participate in a different way, and to share the responsibilities. Some team roles to consider are:

FACILITATOR	Person who leads the group and keeps discussion going according to agenda.
TIMEKEEPER	Person who keeps track of the meeting time. He/She makes sure that the meeting starts/ends on time.
"BUT" WATCHER	Person who listens to others and tries to watch for any negative remarks.
RECORDER	Person who takes the minutes of the meeting and is responsible to get a copy to all team members.
EQUALIZER	Person who makes sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate.
JARGON BUSTER	Person to clarify any jargon/acronyms used in the meeting.
OBSERVER	Person who is impartial and gives feedback.
EMPTY CHAIR	For person who is absent from the meeting. It reminds other members to always keep in mind what that person's feelings/opinions might be even though they aren't there.
KEEPER OF THE RUDDER	Person keeps people on task or topic.
GREETER	Person makes sure that newcomers feel welcome and get introduced.

* **Develop a plan to accomplish team goals.**

√ What action needs to be taken?
√ Who are the persons responsible for each step?
√ What are the timelines for each task?
√ How will we know if the plan is successful?
√ Who else needs to know about the plan?
√ When will we get together to review the plan?

"One of the most difficult things today is finding time to be a team and using time efficiently. But it is critical to successful Inclusion."

* **Use time efficiently.** Most meetings do not have to be hours long. In fact, several well run 15-20 minute meetings can be more effective than one long continuous meeting. Develop an AGENDA for the meeting. This can be done at the beginning of the meeting to be sure everyone has input, or it may be done at the end of the meeting to set the agenda for the next meeting. Having the agenda will give the meeting focus and purpose. Decide on time limits for discussion of agenda items, then use your team "roles" to assist in managing your time.

REMEMBER TO START AND END YOUR MEETINGS ON TIME! If you, as a team, decided on a 15 minute meeting, stick to it. If you need more time you will have to establish a new time. Team members will appreciate knowing a meeting will only last as long as promised and will be more willing to participate at the next meeting.

Adapted from: R. Villa, J.S. Thousand, W. Stainback (Eds.), Restructuring for Caring Effective Education: An Administrative Guide to Creating Heterogeneous Schools. Baltimore, Paul H. Brookes, Publishing Co.

Team Meeting Agenda

Team Meeting for: _____

Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____

Team Members Present:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Roles:	For This Meeting:	For Next Meeting:
Facilitator		
Recorder		
Timekeeper		

Agenda Items for this meeting: Time Limit

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Agenda Items for next meeting:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Minutes:

Assigned Tasks:

Person(s) Responsible	Task	Completed by:

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Parents, as advocates for their children, are consumers of the special education system. Their role is invaluable in providing the best services possible. Parents identify what they see as important for their child to learn and participate in the decision making process. Parents provide information that can only be given from a 24 hour perspective. Also, parents "follow through" and practice at home the skills being taught at school.

Families and educators must work together for the common goal of providing the best education for the student. Trust and respect are essential to the development of effective partnerships among parents and school personnel. To build a trusting and respectful relationship with families:

- √ Accept families as they are;
- √ Respect the contributions of the family;
- √ Keep confidential the information they share;
- √ Try to look at situations from the family's point of view;
- √ Schedule meeting times and locations that are convenient for families; and
- √ Share information and resources with families.

Families are all different. Individualize communication, respect preferences, and provide an array of options for participation from which families can choose.

Effective partnerships depend on frequent, open communication. It is essential that everyone involved with the student establish a means to share information. One-to-one contact between parents and staff can lead to the most effective results for children. Parents appreciate receiving information regularly about their child's activities and progress at school.

As you plan which strategies will help you develop a collaborative partnership, ask yourself the following questions?

* **What** practices does my school currently have to make school a welcome place for parents?

* **What** are some activities I do now to encourage positive parent involvement in school and planning teams?

* **What** activities can I do to strengthen the parent/professional partnership?

Develop your own method of welcoming parents into this partnership. Determine as a team the best method of exchanging information with families on a regular basis.

Communication Sharing Strategies

* **Progress Reports**
  Progress Reports provide families with feedback about how their child id doing at school. Include information about goals and objectives on the Individual Education Plan. Send progress reports home once a day, once a week or more every few weeks.

* **A Daily Notebook or Log**
  A daily log is a good method of communication for exchanging information and strengthening relationships. The log can inform parents of skills that are being taught in school and of upcoming school and classroom events.

* **Newsletters**
  Newsletters are an enjoyable and creative way to provide information and support to families. Use newsletters to inform parents of new programs, special events, and activities at school.

* **Telephone Calls**
  Telephone calls can be a convenient way to share information or to problem solve with families. Arrange for specific times to contact or be contacted by phone. Asking parents what time would be best for them to receive phone calls will avoid disrupting their schedule.

* **School/Classroom Visits**
  Encourage parents to visit their son's or daughter's classroom. Welcome parents into the school as volunteers, observers, consultants and advisors.

* **Regularly Scheduled Team Meetings**
  In addition to the regular parent/teacher conferences, set up specific, regular team meeting times. These may be as often as once per week or once a month. Use this time to share information and problem solve as a team.

* **Home Visits**
  Home visits may be one option preferred by some families. Make home visits only if they are scheduled with the family ahead of time. When considering home visits, it is particularly important to recognize that some parents may not be comfortable with home visits.

CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

No one can solve your day to day challenges except YOUR OWN TEAM! Use a problem solving process to assist in finding solutions to some of the more unique challenges. By using a process, it forces team members to work through the entire problem and toward a more long lasting approach. There are many creative problem solving "processes".

SODAS is one problem solving "process" you might consider.

S

Situation (Define the problem.)

Do some fact finding at the point by thinking about the following:

* Who is or is not affected?
* What is or is not happening?
* When does or doesn't it occur?
* Where does or doesn't it occur?
* Why does or doesn't it occur?
* How does or doesn't it happen?

O

Options

This is the brainstorming part of the creative problem solving process. DO NOT JUDGE the ideas at this point. Try to generate as many ideas as possible, REGARDLESS how silly they might seem. Use phrases or questions to help generate ideas, such as:

* "In What Ways Might We...?"
* "What If There Were No Obstacles...?"
* "Who Else Might Have Ideas...?"
* "If I Had a Magic Wand I Would...?"

D

Disadvantages

Now, take a look at the options and select those that the team feels are possibilities. What might the DISADVANTAGES be if you implement the option? List them on one side of the paper.

A

Advantages

Using the same selected options as above take a look at the ADVANTAGES of implementing the option. List them along aside the disadvantages.

S

Solution

By looking at the disadvantages and advantages begin to form your solution to the situation. Several of the options might be combined into the solution.

SODAS

SITUATION (DEFINE THE PROBLEM) _____

OPTIONS:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

DISADVANTAGES:

a. _____ a. _____ a. _____

b. _____ b. _____ b. _____

c. _____ c. _____ c. _____

d. _____ d. _____ d. _____

ADVANTAGES:

a. _____ a. _____ a. _____

b. _____ b. _____ b. _____

c. _____ c. _____ c. _____

d. _____ d. _____ d. _____

SOLUTION:

[illegible] you agree to a solution, MAKE A PLAN. (Who will do What, When? How will you know if the plan is working?)

MAKE A PLAN!

Once the team has agreed upon a possible solution a plan must be developed. Questions to be answered in the plan are:

* **What** action is necessary?

* **Who** will be responsible for each step in the plan?

* **What** is the timeline?

* **How** will we know if the plan is successful?

* **Who** else needs to know about this plan?

REMEMBER! If the first solution does not work go back to the process. What were some of the other possible solutions? Would one of those work? Keep trying! **BE CREATIVE!**

MODIFYING THE CURRICULUM

All students are able to learn together with their typical peers when they are provided the appropriate supports and modifications to the curriculum. The starting point for curriculum modifications is the regular curriculum. Be careful not to assume that disability always means different. There are many times throughout the school day when students with disabilities can be doing the same thing as students without disabilities.

When adapting the curriculum for students with disabilities, goals and objectives should reflect chronologically age-appropriate skills and activities.

Follow this sequence beginning with #1 to plan regular class participation and adaptations.

...❶ **Can the student do the same activity at the same level as peers?**

IF NOT ...❷ **Can the student do the same activity but with adapted expectations?**

IF NOT ...❸ **Can the student do the same activity by with adapted expectations and materials?**

IF NOT ...❹ **Can the student do a similar activity but with adapted expectations?**

IF NOT ...❺ **Can the student do a similar activity but with adapted materials?**

IF NOT ...❻ **Can the student do a different, parallel activity?**

IF NOT ...❼ **Can the student do a different activity in a different section of the room?**

IF NOT ...❽ **Can the student do a functional activity in another part of the school?**

Reprinted with permission from Project Dakota Outreach Tailor Made Early Intervention Training and Consultation Services, A Division of Dakota Incorporated, 680 O'Neill Drive, Eagan, MN.

Adaptations and modifications to the curriculum should not be the responsibility of just one person. In many schools the classroom teacher, the special educator and the para-educator work together to plan the supports and modifications for specific lessons and assignments. Set aside a time to meet on a regular basis to problem solve and plan for particular students. Creative solutions to unique challenges result in meaningful participation and successful inclusion for students with disabilities.

CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

Change **THE TASK**
Develop a different task for the student.

Change **THE STANDARD**
Make the same task more or less challenging.

Provide **THE SUPPORT**
Use techniques, materials, and staff to help the student.

From Pat Mueller, Vermont Paraprofessional Project

As you make decisions involving curriculum modification and student supports ask the following questions.

- ❑ Does the student have all of the **necessary supports** (i.e., technology, medical)?
- ❑ Does the student have a way to **communicate all day long**?
- ❑ Are all modifications and materials **age-appropriate**?
- ❑ Are modifications made taking into consideration the concept of **comparable challenge**?
- ❑ Does the student have opportunities to **give as well as receive** support?
- ❑ Are all modifications made keeping in mind the **highest expectations**?
- ❑ Has the student been given all of the necessary instructional opportunities to gain **core skills** (reading, math, and writing)?

FROM SPECIAL TO REGULAR, FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY. Statewide Systems Change Project, Institute on Disability/University Affiliated Program, 1993, University of New Hampshire.

IDEAS FOR ADAPTATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

USE OF A TAPE RECORDER

Many problems with materials are related to reading disabilities. The tape recorder is an excellent aid in overcoming this problem. Directions, stories, and specific lessons can be recorded on tape to improve understanding of directions or concepts. Also, to improve reading skills, the student may read the printed words silently as they are presented on tape.

CLARIFY OR SIMPLIFY WRITTEN DIRECTIONS

Some directions are written in paragraph form and contain many units of information. These can be overwhelming to some students. The teacher can help by underlining or highlighting the significant parts of the directions. Rewriting the directions is often a good idea.

For Example:

ORIGINAL DIRECTION: This exercise will show how well you can locate conjunctions. Read the sentence. Look for the conjunctions. When you locate a conjunction under each sentence, circle the number of your answer in the answer column.

REWRITTEN DIRECTION: Read each sentence and circle all conjunctions.

PRESENT SMALL AMOUNTS OF WORK

Tear pages from workbooks and materials to present small assignments to students who are anxious about the amount of work to be done. This technique prevents students from examining an entire workbook, text, or material, and becoming discouraged by the amount of work. Finally, the teacher may wish to reduce the amount of work by requesting the student to complete only odd-numbered problems or items with stars by them. Or the teacher could provide responses to several items and ask the student to complete the rest.

BLOCK OUT EXTRANEOUS STIMULI

If a student is easily distracted by visual stimuli on a full worksheet or page, the student can cover sections of the page not being worked on with various sizes of tagboard. Also, line markers can be used to aid hearing, and windows can be used to display individual math problems.

REPEAT DIRECTIONS

For students who have difficulty following oral directions, it is often helpful to ask them to repeat the directions. The student can repeat the directions to a peer when the teacher is unavailable.

Possibilities for repeating directions include:

* **Give both written and oral directions**
* **Give oral directions in simple language**
* **Give only a few oral directions at a time**
* **Define or explain new terms**
* **Keep written directions at the reading level of the student**

CHANGE RESPONSE MODE

For students who have difficulty with fine-motor responses (such as handwriting), the response mode may be changed to underlining, selecting from multiple choice, sorting, or marking. Provide extra space for writing answers on worksheets, and allow responding on individual chalkboards for students with fine motor problems.

HIGHLIGHT ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

If a student can read a regular textbook but has difficulty finding the essential information, the teacher may use a highlight pen on this information.

LOCATE PLACE IN CONSUMABLE MATERIAL

For considerable materials in which students progress sequentially, such as workbooks, the students may diagonally cut the lower right hand corner of the pages as they are complete. With all the pages cut, the student can readily locate the next page that needs to be completed.

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Some materials do not provide enough practice activities for students with learning problems to acquire mastery on selected skills. Teachers must then supplement a material with practice activities. Recommended practice exercise included instructional games, peer teaching activities, self-correcting materials, computer software programs, and additional worksheets.

PROVIDE A GLOSSARY IN CONTENT AREAS

At the secondary level, the specific language of the content areas requires careful reading. Students might benefit from a glossary of content related terms.

CUT AND PASTE TEXTBOOK CONTENT

The teacher can cut the main ideas or specific content from the test or material and paste the information on separate sheets of paper. Advantages of this procedure include the following:

- The material can be arranged sequentially;
- Headings can be inserted to facilitate organization and retention of ideas;
- Small segment can be presented to allow for closure;
- Distract illustrations, colors, and nonessential information can be removed; and
- The material can be used without rewriting and can be photocopied for use with two or more students.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- Substitute an oral report or other alternative assignment for written assignment
- Tape record reports or assignments
- Dictate assignments
- Shorten assignments
- Allow extra time to complete written assignments
- Write directions in a different color
- Use framed outlines for note taking
- Arrange for students to work as partners to develop stones for writing assignments
- Use of color coding for spelling
- Permit students to use pictures and diagrams as part of their written products

READING

- ✧ Use taped books
- ✧ Use material at student reading level
- ✧ Highlight text
- ✧ Substitute study guide or outline for text
- ✧ Shorten reading assignment
- ✧ Read text to student
- ✧ Allow extra reading time
- ✧ Omit more difficult reading assignments
- ✧ Pre-Teach vocabulary
- ✧ Use only legible, well-spaced photocopies
- ✧ Don't ask student to read aloud
- ✧ Use assisted or choral reading
- ✧ Pair students together for reading assignments

MATH

- ✧ Use graph paper
- ✧ Highlight key words in directions
- ✧ Use of consistent math terms
- ✧ Group problems of same process
- ✧ Box or circle each problem
- ✧ Copy problems for student

MATH, con't.

- ✧ Read story problems to student
- ✧ Use of a calculator
- ✧ Use of number line, counters or computation charts
- ✧ Use of multiplication tables
- ✧ Shorten assignments
- ✧ Use of manipulatives
- ✧ Provide additional practice
- ✧ Review key concepts frequently

STUDY SKILLS

- ✧ Reduce quantity of material to be memorized
- ✧ Use of mnemonic devices (i.e. FIRST LISTS)
- ✧ Use of flash cards
- ✧ Use of assignment notebook with checking system
- ✧ Develop a system for organizing papers
- ✧ Use peer proofing
- ✧ Break long term assignments into steps
- ✧ Allow a friend to use carbon paper to take notes
- ✧ Use of Triangular Review, Tiny Teach
- ✧ Set up study groups

TEST TAKING

- ✧ Provide study guide
- ✧ Test review with teacher, tutor, or other
- ✧ Read test to student
- ✧ Permit dictated responses on essay tests
- ✧ Permit outline answers on essay tests
- ✧ Flexible time limit for tests
- ✧ Use simple working and format for test questions
- ✧ Test smaller units of study at a time
- ✧ Add bonus questions to each test
- ✧ Allow open-book/open note tests
- ✧ Allow students to take to do a project versus exam to demonstrate knowledge

When adapting the curriculum for students with disabilities, the following should be considered:

- ♣ Goals and objectives should reflect chronologically age-appropriate skills and activities.;
- ♣ Goals and objectives should reflect activities which are functional for the student; and,
- ♣ Consider student learning styles, appropriate material and equipment adaptations.

VARY INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Every classroom is comprised of a diverse group of students with unique needs and learning styles. Varying your instructional methods can ensure that the individual learning needs of ALL students in your classroom will be met.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

A noncompetitive teaching strategy in which children are divided into small group for learning activities which have cooperative goals. Each student has a clearly defined role, and each role is equally valued. To complete the group's task successfully, all members of the group must contribute toward group goals. Students are challenged to achieve their own level of excellence while helping each other obtain group goals. Cooperative learning increases appreciation of various abilities and helps students develop appropriate social interactions.

COOPERATIVE TEACHING

Two or more teachers, who sometimes have different areas of expertise, cooperatively teaching a class or unit. The special education teacher and the classroom teacher may team together to instruct a class. When general and special educators co-teach they pool their knowledge and skills in meeting the needs of ALL students. Co-teaching requires a common planning time for the teachers involved. A teacher must be willing to share their classroom, materials and knowledge with another teacher.

ACCOMMODATING PERSONAL LEARNING STYLES

All students do not learn in the same way or at the same rate. Allowing students to learn and demonstrate what they know using the style and methods which help them capitalize on their strengths and places more focus on the individual. Some students learn best visually while some learn best auditorily. Some students prefer working in groups while some prefer to work alone. Knowing your students' learning styles will maximize learning opportunities for your class. According to Thomas Armstrong, author of **In Their Own Way: Discovering and Encouraging Your Child's Personal Learning Style**, *"Every kid an become a successful learner by recognizing and encouraging personal learning styles in the classroom."*

WHOLE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Whole language or language-experience instruction allows each student to experience success at their own level while participating in activities together. Whole language focuses on the whole child and crosses over the entire curriculum. While some students are writing in their journals another may use the computer to "write" in his journal, while another may use pictures to "write" in his journal.

INTEGRATED THEMATIC UNITS

Thematic units provide many opportunities for creatively accommodating students with unique needs. This method crosses curricular areas in order to teach students practical relevance of what they are learning.

ACCEPTING VARIED LEARNING GOALS

"It's okay for students to be doing different things in the same environment."

Regular education classes can provide a wide variety of appropriate learning opportunities and challenges for students with a wide range of learning needs, interest, and capabilities. Students with diverse abilities can participate in meaningful ways in age-appropriate regular classes. For example, during a map reading activity, one student may be called upon to discuss the economic system of the country, another may be requested to identify a color, while another may simply be requested to grasp and hold a corner of the map. (Susan & William Stainback, **Teaching Exceptional Children, Fall, 1988**).

INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

Some students learn best and prefer to work individually. In an inclusive classroom students may also receive individual instruction on skills and concepts that relate to their individual goals and objectives.

TECHNOLOGY

Advances in technology are enabling students with disabilities opportunities to learn and be participants in the school community. Technology in schools has been used successfully to create accommodations for a variety of learners. Taped books for students with learning disabilities or visual impairments, closed captioning for students who are deaf, and tape recordings of lessons for those students who have difficulty with reading comprehension or taking notes are all examples of technology. Computers with expanded keyboards, switches and other adaptations enable students with disabilities access to information, a way to complete class assignments, and opportunities to communicate with others. Computer software is available to teach a variety of skills and concepts. Technology has great potential to increase participation of students with disabilities in our schools and classrooms.

Many individuals think of inclusion as just something that happens within the school walls or within the classroom. In my opinion, that is only part of it. Inclusion also means having the child with a disability included in the family and the community.

A South Dakota Parent

PARA-EDUCATORS

The role of the para-educator is critical to the success of an inclusive program. The para-educators role is to facilitate the academic, behavioral, and social growth of students. Even when assigned to an individual student or group of students, the para-educator should be viewed as a "classroom assistant".

The para-educator is a **KEY** participant in the education of students with unique learning needs and a valuable member of the team. Their input to the team is invaluable because of their close contact with the students. Include para-educators as members of problem-solving teams and as participants during common planning times.

Para-Educators support teacher-directed, whole class instruction, monitor and support students during independent work, and provide follow-up instruction. Para-Educators create many adaptations, take data, keep anecdotal records, maintain good relationships and communication with parents, facilitate friendships and more! Because of the importance of the para-educator's role, appropriate orientation and training must be provided.

Ongoing communication between educators and para-educator is essential to insure positive experiences for everyone, particularly students.

To make the most of this resource, the para-educator and the classroom teacher should schedule time to meet and discuss some of the following items:

* Their philosophy of education.
* Classroom rules and discipline policy.
* Goals for the students in the classroom.
* The paraprofessional's role and responsibilities.
* A time to plan and collaborate with each other.
* A plan for ongoing means of communication about problems and questions.
* The classroom schedule/routine.
* The student(s) strengths and needs and how best to meet them.
* Any student information the para-educator needs to know. (health problems, behavior problems, medications of student)
* Responsibilities regarding any confidentiality.
* Is there any documentation on specific students needed? If so, what?
* Identification of any additional training needed.
* School wide policies that the paraprofessionals may need to know.
* Educational jargon with which the paraprofessional may need to be familiar.
* Other professionals (i.e., Occupation, Physical, and Speech Therapists) and their roles.
* Locations of supplies and machines.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional

- Follow classroom policies developed by the classroom teacher.
- Provide direct instruction and facilitate learning opportunities for individuals and groups of students.
- Assist classroom teacher with classroom responsibilities, including assignment correction, class coverage, classroom maintenance.
- Collaborate with full team, including parents and students.
- Maintain confidentiality and respect for student/family.

"More and more responsibility is being placed on paraprofessionals to deliver services to children in inclusionary, educational settings. They provide stability in the classroom and assistance to the regular educator."

A South Dakota Educator.

Adapted from: IDEAS FOR INCLUSION, The Classroom Teacher's Guide to Integrating Students With Severe Disabilities, Anne M. Beninghof.

FRIENDS AND RELATIONSHIPS

We only have to think about the friends that we have in our own lives to understand how important friends are. We go to movies, out to dinner, talk about sports, share secrets and much, much more with friends. Most of us can't imagine not having a friend.

In the past, students with disabilities and their peers have had few opportunities to get to know each other. Many of those students with disabilities weren't able to build meaningful relationships with other students. The result ....**NO FRIENDS!**

When students with disabilities are educated in separate classrooms there are very few opportunities to develop friendships. In inclusive classrooms, where students learn side by side, they develop an appreciation of the similarities and differences in themselves and others. Students with and without disabilities offer each other support and encouragement in classrooms where ALL students are valued.

"Inclusive education has been a positive experience for my son. He has been included since Kindergarten and is now in the fourth grade. He is like by his classmates, learned how to be a student, and has made significant academic progress. He has friends. His teacher and para-educator have structured opportunities to promote the development of friendships and that has made all the difference."

A South Dakota Parent

Sharing common spaces and experiences set the stage for real friendships to develop. Some of the friends that students with disabilities make in school will be their neighbors, community members and co-workers when they reach adulthood.

Children need three things to develop and maintain friendships:

- **Close proximity;**
- **Shared experiences; and**
- **Equal opportunities**

Mary Falvey
Education Professor
California State - Los Angeles

As students with disabilities are included in regular classes and activities they have many more opportunities to learn together, get to know one another, and develop friendships. They may need parents, teachers and school personnel to help them make connections with other students. Teachers and parents can promote friendships for students with disabilities by presenting them to others in a positive and enhancing way.

INTERPRETATION
A CRITICAL ELEMENT

Is encouraging friendships among all students a goal in the class (not just focusing on the student with disabilities)?

Do the adults involved show that all children are equally valued and respected through every word uttered and every action taken?

Are all children spoken to in the same manner, tone of voice, etc.?

Are all children treated age-appropriately?

Do adults intentionally find ways to highlight each child's strengths for the rest of the class?

Do adults reflect that they, themselves, are totally comfortable with all the children (even in potentially "uncomfortable" situations, like behavioral challenges, feeding, toileting, etc.)?

Do adults promote a fun and friendly classroom atmosphere to help children feel at ease with each other? (Quick, D., 1991. Personal Communication)

Reprinted with permission from: Schaffner, C.Beth, & Buswell, Barbara E., *Connecting Students: A Guide to Thoughtful Friendship for Education & Families.*
PEAK Parent Center, 1990.

TECHNIQUES FOR SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Present students in the most positive light.

Watch children to identify budding relationships and then encourage them.

Model concern and interest in all students.

Structure activities in which students feel free to talk about their feelings and relationships.

Help build a support "Circle of Friends" for a child.

Marsha Forest and Evelyn Lusthaus describe the "Circle of Friends" as a "network that allows for the genuine involvement of children in a friendship, caring, and support role with their peers."

Offer Cooperative Learning groups for class activities.

Promote the inclusion of all students in extra-curricular clubs and high status activities in school.

Encourage students to interact in groups of three or four if they are uneasy.

Follow through on school relationships by assisting p a r e n t s to invite the child's school friends over to their house.

Reprinted with permission from: Schaffner, C.Beth, and Buswell, Barbara E., *Opening Doors: Strategies for Including All Students in Regular Education,* PEAK Parent Center, 1990.

PEER BUDDIES

The use of several "peer buddies" to support a student with significant needs throughout the day is an effective way to transfer interaction from adults to peers. Peer Buddies enable students with disabilities the opportunity to learn what is expected of someone their age. In addition to developing new skills and learning new concepts, students with disabilities learn how to be a fourth grader or a teenager by interacting with other students.

Educators, parents, and other team members should look for ways to involve peers in supporting a student with disabilities in the activities of the classroom and school.

According to Lou Brown (1989) a student with disabilities could be supported by this peers in the following ways:

* **P**eer Tutor
* **E**ating companion
* **A**rt, home economics, industrial arts, music, P.E. companion
* **R**egular class companion
* **F**riend
* **E**xtracurricular companion
* **A**fter school project companion
* **A**fter school companion
* **T**ravel companion
* **N**eighbor

What children want is to be included, be accepted, to be able to fit in, and BE IN THE CLASSROOM WITH THEIR PEERS!!

A South Dakota Parent

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

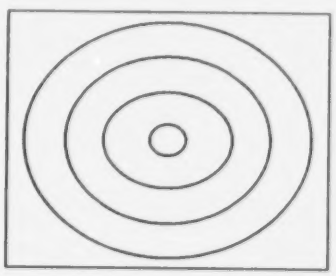
Consider using the "Circle of Friends" activity if a student is having difficulty "connecting" with his peers and a more individualized strategy seems necessary. Circle of Friends, developed by Marsha Forest and Judith Snow, helps children understand that friendships are important for everyone. This activity can assist children in understanding the social needs of children being included in the classroom for the first time.

The Circle of Friends Activity is carried out as follows:

Teacher: (To a group or class of students)

All of you are pretty good at making friends. Some of you like to have one or two close friends and others of you like to have many more. The purpose of this activity is to help us think about these friendships and other relationships and how important they are in our lives. After we reflect on our own "circles of friends", I am going to ask you to think about a student whose circle may look quite different from yours and enlist your help in figuring out how we could help him become more connected. (The teacher has the students complete the following exercise--stopping after each step to discuss what students have learned about their circles. The teacher prompts discussion by sharing information from his or her own circle first--then asks others to volunteer information from their circles.)

Step #1: Draw four circles on your paper (see example).



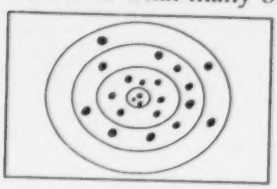
Step #2: Beginning with the inner circle, write in the people who are the very closest to you.

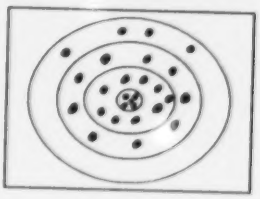
Step #3: In the next circle, put in those people who you are close to - but you didn't put them in the inner circle.

Step #4: In the third circle, put <u>groups</u> of people that you enjoy spending time with (track team, choir, scouts, etc.).

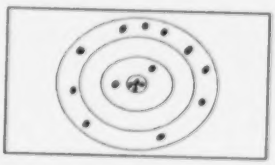
Step #5: In the fourth circle, put people who you like and have learned to count on--but they get paid to be in your life (coach, doctor, teacher, dentist, dance teacher, etc.).

Step #6: Here is what many of your "circles" look like:





Step #7: But, this might be the circle of one of your classmates. What do you think about this circle?



Step #8: What can we do to help a student develop a circle that has many more friends in it?

When you've completed this activity discuss how the group can implement their ideas.

Periodically - revisit how "connections" and "friendships" are going for the student.

INTEGRATED RELATED SERVICES

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, related services are those services other than special educational services that "are required to assist a child with disabilities to benefit from special education..."

RELATED SERVICE CONSULTATION IN REGULAR CLASSES

Integrating related service provisions (speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.) during and in regular class can be a more functional and therefore beneficial means of meeting a child's needs for related service while maximizing the child's participation in regular education. Children who have difficulty generalizing skills to new places or materials, may benefit from integrated related services.

The services listed in the regulations include transportation, speech pathology, audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services and medical services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes. School health services, social work services, and parent counseling and training are also included.

An integrated therapy approach means that traditional therapy objectives are taught across the school day in real-life situations. Therapists, as team members, identify what needed and appropriate skills the student can learn in the educational environment, as well as the necessary accommodations required. They then work with other staff to implement necessary interventions. Teachers can reinforce the objectives as part of the typical day's activities. This results in "therapy" objectives being worked on every day, throughout the day, rather than one or two scheduled times a week. The therapist's time can be used to do direct therapy, monitor children's programs, train others and consult with families or staff.

The four basic assumptions of an integrated therapy approach include (adapted from Sternat, Messina, Nietupski, Lyon, & Brown, 1977):

1. **Assessment of motor, sensory and communication abilities is best conducted in natural environments.**

2. **Students are taught clusters of motor, sensory and communication skills through age-appropriate functional and meaningful activities.**

3. **"Therapy" occurs throughout the day in all situations and settings in which the student functions.**

4. **Basic skills (motor, sensory, communication) are taught and verified in the situations and settings in which they occur.**

Using an integrated therapy approach, effective therapy is defined in terms of creating avenues for children to have access to and be able to participate in typical activities.

Adapted from: Integrating Related Service into Programs for Students with Severe and Multiple Handicaps, The Kentucky Systems Change Project, 1990.

PEER TUTORS

One of the best ways to learn a subject or skill is to teach it to someone else. Peer tutoring systems are based on that principle. Peer tutoring is having a student who has grasped the material being taught instruct another child who has not mastered it. Peer tutoring can be initiated by the teacher in his/her classroom.

Cross-Age tutoring programs use older tutors who know the subject matter to tutor younger students who do not. The use of cross-age tutoring does not change the teacher's responsibility for designing an effective instructional program for each child. Cross-Age tutoring becomes another means to reinforce material for children.

Peer tutor programs require planning and some tutor training. It is essential that tutors be prepared for what it is they are expected to do. Discuss how to present material, how to support correct answers and respond to errors, and the nature of expected personal behavior.

THINGS TO CONSIDER IN PLANNING A TUTOR PROGRAM

- where and when the tutoring will take place;
- which students will be involved and how they will be selected and trained;
- what material will be used for the tutoring and how it will be prepared; and
- who will supervise and evaluate the work of the tutors.

THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR PEER TUTOR TRAINING

- information about the program;
- tutor's responsibilities;
- lesson structure and teaching procedures;
- measurement and record-keeping procedures; and
- personal behavior.

MAPS: MCGILL ACTION PLANNING SYSTEM

MAPS was originally designed by Marsha Forest and Evelyn Lusthaus to help welcome children with disabilities back into regular schools and classrooms.

A collaborative action planning process, MAPS brings together the key people in a child's life. This team creates a plan of action to be implemented in the child's education program.

This planning process involves family members, classmates, teachers, other school personnel, and the student in a discussion of that student's involvement in regular school and community environments. Planning emphasizes a child's strengths, talents and abilities rather than "disabilities".

MAPS is facilitated by two people. One person facilitates the MAP and the other person records information shared by the group.

MAPS is comprised of seven questions which assists the group through a discussion of who the person is, what their strengths and needs may be and what an ideal day might look like for that student.

MAPS: Seven Key Questions

1. **What is the Story/History of the person, family?**
2. **What is your dream for your child?**
3. **What is your nightmare?**
4. **Who is the child?**
5. **What are the child's strengths, gifts, and talents?**
6. **What are the child's needs?**
7. **What would the child's ideal day at school look like and what must be done to make it happen?**

Through this process, the plan will assist in bringing the person closer into the daily life of the school or community. The results can be used in the development of an Individual Education Plan.

Adapted from: The Inclusion Papers, Published by: Inclusion Press, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1993.

TRANSITION PLANNING TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL

Extra planning and support is necessary for most students to make a successful transition to the next grade level. Often times the receiving teacher has to depend on informal contact with the sending teacher, casual observations, and documentation in order to gain information about his/her new students. A more formal approach is necessary for students who need adaptations in goals, methods, or approaches in order to ensure their success. Planning for a successful transition of a student is basically a process of sharing information effectively and efficiently.

The student's planning TEAM will want to include the receiving classroom teacher in the transition planning. You may also want to include the student and friends/classmates if appropriate.

It is important to start early enough so that all team members have enough time to convey the information which is necessary. The receiving teacher can spend time observing the student in his or her current classroom. The student could visit the receiving teacher's class.

Investing time in the transition process will ensure that the educational gains made over the school year are maintained and built upon in the following year.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Learning Characteristics

- What is the student's learning style? (Learns best from auditory input? Visual?)
- What is the student's learning rate?

Instructional Approaches/Styles of Interaction

- What types of instructional approaches seem most successful?
- Are there particular styles of interaction which are best suited to the student?

Physical Environment

- Does the student need physical support in seating?
- Does the room arrangement need to be modified to accommodate any equipment the student may use?

Interests and Motivations

- What gets the student excited?
- What are the student's hobbies?

Communication

- How does the student communicate?
- Is the student able to express needs?

Friendships/Social Skills

- Will any of the student's friends be moving on with the student?
- Does the student make friends easily?
- How does the student interact socially?

Parent-Professional Partnership

- How much involvement does the parent/care giver prefer to have?
- What form does parent/school communication take and what is the frequency? (E.G. daily notebook, weekly phone calls?)

Achievement in Different Curricular Areas

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Content Areas
- Special Area Classes

Functional Routines

- Self-Help skills
- School jobs
- Free-Time skills
- Community Skills

Other School Routines

- ❍ Concerns about the bus or walking/wheeling to school
- ❍ Breakfast program
- ❍ Lunch
- ❍ Extracurricular activities/participation
- ❍ Recess
- ❍ Transitions between activities

Health/Safety Concerns

- ❍ Medications
- ❍ Allergies
- ❍ Seizures

Equipment/Adaptations

- ❍ Does the student use any material aids or adaptations (e.g., picture schedule, pencil grip, calculator, picture shopping list)?
- ❍ Are testing modifications needed?

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People need to realize that education is not the most important thing in a child's life, family is and "inclusion" includes family.
A South Dakota Parent

INCLUDING CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF-BLIND

Most of us learn by using the five senses: hearing, vision, smell, taste, and touch. Hearing and vision are the two senses by which people take in the most information. Therefore, the child with hearing and vision impairments (deaf-blindness) is restricted in the amount of information they can receive.

The term "deaf-blind" doesn't necessarily mean **total** lack of hearing and vision. By federal definition individuals are deaf-blind or dual sensory impaired if they have **"auditory and visual impairments, the combination of which creates such severe communication and other developmental and learning needs that they cannot be appropriately educated without special education and related services, beyond those that would be provided solely for children with hearing impairments, visual impairments, or severe disabilities, to address their education needs due to these concurrent disabilities".** In plain language this means that a person who is deaf-blind has a combination of impairments of both hearing and vision that interferes with the ability of the person to function **effectively** in the "hearing-sighted" world. They may have enough hearing to understand speech, especially when using a hearing aid, and may have some usable vision with or without corrective lenses.

When sight and sound are lost or severely impaired, the world literally shrinks--it is only as large as one can reach with one's fingertips. Concepts and information must often be supplied by other people on a one-to-one basis or by using secondary senses of touch, smell or kinesthetic awareness. This can be frustrating, isolating and lonely. Sensory disabilities impact how a learner receives and takes in information. If we think of deaf-blindness as an information gathering disability, it helps us to remember that adaptations must be made and instructional techniques must be used which ensure that the student who is deaf-blind receives the same amount of information about the activity, lesson or topic as students who are taking in the information with intact vision and hearing.

Children with deaf-blindness need to have direct contact with the world in order to interact with it. They have to explore the various parts of an object to create the idea of a "whole". They must "check things out" over and over again in many different settings and situations to develop a mental image of the object.

WELCOMING STUDENTS WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS

PLAN AHEAD!

- √ Check current assessment data on the student's hearing and vision. What does the student actually see and hear?
- √ Know what information is critical when planning an activity. Wha. senses are involved in this activity?
- √ How will tne student receive the information? If I close my eyes what do I need help with?
- √ What are they expected to do during the activity? What does the activity look like, sound like, feel like-make a T-Chart.

COMMUNICATE!

- ☛ Know what mode of communication the student uses.
- ☛ Always let the student know what is coming next.
- ☛ Use cues to alert the student that you want to communicate.
- ☛ Talk with the student, NOT the interpreter.

BE CREATIVE!

- ✎ Look for multiple methods to present a concept.
- ✎ Try to involve all of the senses of the activity.
- ✎ Ask the other students for ideas.
- ✎ Look for alternative means for the student to be involved.

TIME!

- ⧗ Allow extra time for the student to respond to questions, greetings, etc..
- ⧗ Don't rush the activity-allow the student time enough to explore and receive as much information as possible during the activity.

RELAX!

- ☺ Think of the student as a student first, then consider the disability!
- ☺ Ask the student what they need in order to participate in the activity.
- ☺ Remember participating in the activity and feeling as though they BELONG is as important to the student as any content you might present!

Print Materials Resource Listing

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